The ZeFRS Companion

An expansion for ZeFRS
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ZeFRS adapted from original rules by Dave "Zeb" Cook
By
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More information can be found at:
http://www.midcoast.com/~ricekrwc/zefrs/
and
http://forum.rpg.net/showthread.php?t=327143

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The ZeFRS Companion

A Bestiary

by Artikid and The Good Assyrian

More than any other expansion, readers have wanted a collection of monsters and other creatures. Two ZeFRS stalwarts have come through in spades: Artikid drew up a menu of monster aspects that will help referees craft unique challenges to be faced at the climax of their stories, in the best Howardian tradition; The Good Assyrian, meanwhile, has compiled a list of more commonplace beasts, both those that are normally dangerous and those who only sometimes produce outsize or especially vicious specimens, and some frequently encountered monsters.

Your character will face two types of Adversaries - Enemies and Foes. Enemies are the most common opponents your characters will meet. Enemies are soldiers, hired assassins, guardsmen, sailors, common animals - characters who do not live by the sword the way your character does. Your character is superior to Enemies and has certain advantages over them in combat.

Foes are your peers - characters as powerful, and as daring, as your own or Monsters. Beyond your own talents, you do not have any special advantages over these NPCs.

Apart from Talent pools and Weaknesses Adversaries will have a few additional informations attached: these include Natural or Typical Armor and Weapons, and Special abilities. These are explained in the following section.

List of Special Abilities

Aversion to (Item)

The creature must successfully pass a Yellow Will Roll to get within 10 feet of the object of its Aversion.

Drain (Talent) Attack

The creature's attack subtracts from the named Talent score instead of the Damage Talent and adds them to the creatures' Talent of the same name.

Points drained from victims are lost at a rate of 1 point per hour if in excess of the creature's original Talent score.

If the victim does not have the named Talent or has lost the Talent's score, the next points are taken off the Target's Damage Talent.

Lost Talent points are recovered at the same rate Damage points are recovered.

Drain attacks always are Melee combat attacks that ignore armor and Magic Protection.

Ethereal

The creature has no physical body and thus no Prowess, Fighting or Endurance Talents save for Will and Drain attack Abilities.

Ethereal creatures exist on a different plane of existence that borders our own, they can see and hear what happens in the physical world but are invisible most of the time.

Ethereals can only interact with the physical world if they manifest an Apparition at the expense of one Will point per hour.

Apparition movement rates are determined using their Will Talent.

Apparitions can only be affected by magic and are immune to Physical and Specific damage. Any damage they are susceptible to is subtracted from their Will score.

At 0 Will a Manifest Ethereal creature that suffers extra damage must check its Will Talent: On a Failure the creature is destroyed permanently, on any success but a Red one the creature is forced back to invisibility. On a Red success the creature can keep manifesting an apparition.

Ethereal creatures recover all lost Will points at Midnight.

Famed

The creature is notorious for some reasons. It is always considered a Foe and its defeat awards the characters 1 or more Fame point.

The referee should chose on a case by case basis when to grant an adversary this special ability.

Fearsome

The creature has a special Fear Talent (Insight Pool).

Whenever any character gets in sight of the Fearsome creature it must pass an Action roll against Will minus the Fear score. On a White result the character is forced to flee the Fearsome creature and won't get within 30 feet of it. On a green result the character is shaken and gets a -1CS to all Action rolls if within 30 feet of the creature. Any other result allows the fear struck character to act freely. Each new encounter requires a new test of Will.

Magic Protection

The creature is immune to all non-magical attacks. If the creature has any kind of armor it is used against damage sources that can bypass its magical immunity to damage.

Mindless

The creature is immune to all mind affecting effects like Mind Control Magic, Hypnotism or even simple social graces. No communication can be made with Mindless creatures.

Small

The creature is much smaller than a human being and is thus a difficult target. All attacks against it by human-sized opponents suffer a -2CS penalty.

Susceptibility to (Item)

For each round of physical contact between the creature and the object of its Susceptibility roll an attack on the 0 Column. Damage inflicted by Susceptibility ignores any kind of armor, even magical ones and the Magic protection special ability.

If a Red result comes out, the creature must pass a Damage Check or die.

If the creature is struck by a weapon crafted with the item to which it is susceptible, it suffers an extra damage point.

Tiny

The creature is so small that it's hard to see, let alone hit in combat, and it leaves very little trace of its passage. All attempts to spot the creature with Observation or follow it with Tracking suffer a -2CS penalty. All attacks against it by human-sized opponents suffer a -3CS penalty.

Unliving

Unliving creatures have no need to eat, drink, sleep or breathe. Unliving are also immune to diseases and drugs.

Whenever an Unliving is hit by Specific Damage it is never affected by those that cause Stun, Death or Unconsciousness.

HUMANS

Typical "common men" are built around 25 Talent points and have one weakness, more experienced humans may have up to 30-40 Talent Points and a few Fame points.

Heroic humans are built around 40-50 Talent points and have one to three weaknesses plus a few Fame points. More experienced heroic humans may have up to 80-100 or more Talent Points and many Fame points.

Whether a human is a Foe or an Enemy is up to the GM; in the end it is a matter of plot more than Game mechanics. However, stats for characters who are typically foes are so marked.

Cultmaster Sorceror (Foe)

Prowess 0	Fighting 1	Endurance 2	Knowledge 2	Perception 1	Insight 2
Movement – 5	Dirk - 7 Brawling - 3	Damage - 7 Poison Resistance - 8 Will – 5	Arcane Languages - 8 Language - 8 Lore - 5 Reading/Writing - 8	Fame - 10	Observation -5 Hypnotism - 5 Mind Control - 10 Telepathy - 3 Obsession - 1

Weakness: Disfigurement (e.g. cloven hoof for one foot)
Weapons: Dirk
Armor: Jack
Special Abilities: Spells - *Paralyzing Glare* (easy), *Sound* (easy), *Illusion* (moderate), *Long-Term Suggestion* (Moderate), poisoned weapon (dirk) 15/20/5 minutes

Fanatic Militant

These are fighters who have taken up arms to help a charismatic religious leader or political firebrand overthrow the established order.

Prowess 0	Fighting 1	Endurance 0	Knowledge 0	Perception 0	Insight 0
Movement – 4	Dirk – 5 Brawl – 3	Damage - 4 Stamina - 3	Arcane Languages - 1		Observation - 3

Weakness: Weakness to Drink or Drugs
Weapons: Dirk
Armor: Jack
Special Abilities: Poisoned weapon (dirk) 3/5/10 minutes

Guardsman

Prowess 0	Fighting 1	Endurance 0	Knowledge 0	Perception 0	Insight 0
Movement - 4 Strength – 4	Broadsword – 5 Brawl – 3 Wrestle - 2	Damage - 4 Stamina - 3		Observation - 3	

Weakness: Weakness to Drink or Drugs
Weapons: Broadsword
Armor: Standard shield, basinet, chain mail shirt
Special Abilities: None

Master of the Guard/Warrior Chieftain (Foe)

Prowess 0	Fighting 2	Endurance 1	Knowledge 1	Perception 1	Insight 0
Movement - 6 Strength – 3	Broadsword - 6 Dirk - 6 Two weapons fighting – 8	Damage - 8 Poison Resistance - 3 Will - 3	Language - 5 Lore - 3 Reading/Writing – 5	Fame - 10 Observation - 3	Personal Magnetism - 5

Weakness: None
Weapons: Broadsword, Dirk
Armor: Basinet, chain mail suit
Special Abilities: None

Monarch's Champion (Foe)

Prowess 2	Fighting 1	Endurance 1	Knowledge 1	Perception 1	Insight 0
Movement - 6 Strength - 10 Animal Reflexes - 5	Broadsword - 8 Dirk - 6	Damage - 8 Poison Resistance - 3 Will - 3	Language - 5 Reading/Writing – 5	Fame - 10 Observation - 3	

Weakness: None
Weapons: Broadsword, Dirk
Armor: Bronze basinet, Bronze chain mail suit
Special Abilities: None

Street/Tavern Brawler

Prowess 0	Fighting 0	Endurance 0	Knowledge 0	Perception 0	Insight 0
Movement - 3	Dirk – 3 Brawl – 2	Damage - 3		Observation - 1	

Weakness: Weakness to Drink or Drugs
Weapons: Dirk
Armor: None
Special Abilities: None

Warrior Maiden

Prowess 0	Fighting 1	Endurance 0	Knowledge 0	Perception 0	Insight 0
Movement - 4 Strength – 4	Broadsword – 5 Brawl – 3 Wrestle - 2	Damage - 4 Stamina - 3		Observation - 3	

Weakness: Weakness to Drink or Drugs
Weapons: Broadsword
Armor: Bronze basinet, bronze chain mail shirt
Special Abilities: None

ANIMALS AND OTHER CREATURES

Any bonus or penalty noted for a creature's natural armament is a weapon bonus (bonus to damage). All natural weapons have an initiative bonus of zero. Natural armor never imposes a Movement penalty.

Bear (Enemy)

Prowess 3	Fighting 2	Endurance 3	Knowledge 0	Perception 0	Insight 0
Stength - 25 Animal Reflexes - 4 Movement – 10	Claws - 15 Bite - 10	Damage - 20 Stamina - 10			Animal Senses - 5

Weapons: Claws +1, Bite +1
Armor: Natural Armor +1
Special Abilities: none; a polar bear will also have a Swimming Talent of 20

Beetles, Giant Carrion (Enemy)

Prowess 1	Fighting 0	Endurance 1	Knowledge 0	Perception 0	Insight 0
Stength - 10 Animal Reflexes - 4 Movement – 4	Bite - 5	Damage - 8 Stamina - 5			Animal Sense - 5

Weapons: Mandibles +1
Armor: Natural Armor +2
Special Abilities: Small

Giant Centipede (Enemy)

Prowess 2	Fighting 0	Endurance 2	Knowledge 0	Perception 0	Insight 0
Climbing - 10 Strength - 5 Movement - 8	Bite- 6	Damage - 8 Stamina - 5 Poison Resistance - 10	Survival - 5		Animal Senses - 5 Fear - 3

Weapons: Fangs +0, Poison 10/5/1 hour
Armor: Natural Armor +1
Special Abilities: Fearsome, Small

Desert Worm (Enemy)

A large carnivorous worm with a round mouth ringed in several layers of sharp teeth.

Prowess 3	Fighting 1	Endurance 1	Knowledge 1	Perception 0	Insight 1
Animal Reflexes - 10 Movement – 10 Strength - 10	Maw - 10	Damage - 10	Survival - 10		Animal Senses - 5 Danger Sense - 3 Directional Sense - 3 Weather Sense -3

Weapons: Sharp Teeth +1
Armor: Natural Armor +1
Special Abilities: None

Ghost (Foe)

Prowess 0	Fighting 0	Endurance 1	Knowledge 2	Perception 0	Insight 2
	Drain Attack – 10	Magic – 5 Will - 10	Arcane Languages - 5 Language - 5 Lore - 5 Reading/Writing - 5		Fear – 10 Magic Sense - 10

Weapons: None
Armor: None
Special Abilities: Aversion to (daylight), Drain (Will) Attack, Ethereal, Fearsome, Unliving

Ghoul (Enemy)

Ancient burial grounds and sites of epic slaughter are often haunted by these repulsive animated human corpses. They are fiercely territorial and although they dine primarily on the dead, they will happily make a still-struggling meal of any living man who stumbles into their labyrinthine warren.

Prowess 3	Fighting 2	Endurance 1	Knowledge 0	Perception 0	Insight 1
Animal Reflexes – 10 Movement – 10 Strength – 10	Claws - 10 Wrestling - 10	Damage - 10			Animal Senses - 5 Danger Sense - 5 Fear - 5

Weapons: Claws and fangs +0
Armor: Natural Armor +1
Special Abilities: Aversion to (daylight), Fearsome, Mindless, Unliving

Giant Lizard (Enemy)

Lizards varying in size from that of a large dog to a small pony can be found in almost every warm or temperate climate, from desert to jungle to mountain forests.

Prowess 2	Fighting 0	Endurance 0	Knowledge 0	Perception 0	Insight 0
Movement -4 Strength - 10 Animal Reflexes - 5	Jaws - 8	Damage - 8			Animal Senses - 3 Fear- 3

Weapons: Fangs 0
Armor: Natural Armor +1
Special Abilities: Fearsome

Horse (Enemy)

Prowess 3	Fighting 0	Endurance 2	Knowledge 0	Perception 0	Insight 1
Strength - 3 Movement - 20	Hooves - 3 Bite - 1	Damage - 15 Poison - 3			Animal Senses - 10

Weapons: Hooves 0, Bite -1
Armor: None
Special Abilities: A combative horse may rush an opponent as a human, but unlike a human, on a red result the horse has trampled its foe for real damage.

Lion (Enemy)

These stats may be used for any large cat, such as a saber-tooth tiger.

Prowess 3	Fighting 3	Endurance 2	Knowledge 0	Perception 1	Insight 1
Strength - 20 Movement – 15	Claws - 20 Bite - 15	Damage - 15 Poison - 5		Tracking - 10	Animal Senses - 10

Weapons: Claws +1, Bite 0
Armor: None
Special Abilities: none

Man-Eating Ape (Enemy)

Many of a sword-and-sorcery world's forests and jungles are home to deadly primates with a taste for human flesh.

Prowess 6	Fighting 3	Endurance 5	Knowledge 0	Perception 0	Insight 0
Strength - 30 Movement - 10 Climbing - 20	Claws - 20 Wrestling - 10	Damage - 20 Poison - 15 Stamina - 20			Animal Senses - 5

Weapons: Claws +1, Crushing +1
Armor: None
Special Abilities: A man-eating ape's grip is so powerful that it can do killing damage when wrestling.

Pit Viper (Enemy)

A pit viper's bite causes very little damage on its own, but the snake's venom is among the most lethal in the world.

Prowess 1	Fighting 0	Endurance 0	Knowledge 0	Perception 0	Insight 1
Animal Reflexes -10 Movement – 3 Swimming -5	Fangs - 3	Damage - 1	Survival - 8		Animal Senses - 5 Danger Sense - 3 Directional Sense - 3 Weather Sense -3

Weapons: Fangs -2, poison 13/15/1 hour
Armor: None
Special Abilities: Tiny

Rat, Giant (Enemy)

These massive rodents, nearly the size of a cat, carry a filth-borne contagion in their bite.

Prowess 1	Fighting 0	Endurance 1	Knowledge 0	Perception 0	Insight 1
Swimming -6 Climbing - 4 Strength - 5	Bite – 3	Damage - 6 Stamina - 5 Poison Resistance - 5	Survival - 8		Animal Senses - 5 Danger Sense - 3 Directional Sense - 3 Weather Sense -3 Fear - 2

Weapons: Fangs –1, may transmit fever 5/5/1 day
Armor: Natural Armor +1
Special Abilities: Fearsome, Small

Rat, Large (Enemy)

Large rats pack even a weaker bite than their giant cousins, but the disease they carry is no less virulent.

Prowess 1	Fighting 0	Endurance 0	Knowledge 0	Perception 0	Insight 1
Swimming - 6 Climbing - 4	Bite - 3	Damage - 1	Survival - 8		Animal Senses - 5 Danger Sense - 3 Directional Sense - 3 Weather Sense - 3

Weapons: Fangs –2, may transmit fever 5/5/1 day
Armor: None
Special Abilities: Tiny

Snake, Giant: Constrictor (Enemy)

Unlike humans, giant constrictors deal killing damage with their wrestling attack.

Prowess 3	Fighting 1	Endurance 2	Knowledge 0	Perception 0	Insight 1
Animal Reflexes - 5 Movement – 5 Strength - 15 Swimming – 5	Wrestle - 15	Damage - 10 Stamina - 5 Poison Resistance - 5	Survival - 8		Animal Senses - 5 Danger Sense - 3 Directional Sense - 3 Weather Sense -3 Fear - 5

Weapons: Constriction +1
Armor: Natural armor +1
Special Abilities: Fearsome

Scorpion, Black (Enemy)

Prowess 0	Fighting 0	Endurance 0	Knowledge 0	Perception 0	Insight 0
Stength – 2 Movement – 7	Sting - 7	Damage – 2			

Weapons: Stinger +0, poison 15/10/5 minutes
Armor: None
Special Abilities: Small

Skeleton (Enemy)

Sorcerors skilled in the black art of necromancy may animate the bones of the dead to do their bidding, including serving as guards or soldiers.

Prowess 0	Fighting 0	Endurance 0	Knowledge 0	Perception 0	Insight 0
Movement - 4	Sword - 4	Damage - 4			Fear - 2

Weapons: broadsword
Armor: none
Special Abilities: Fearsome, Mindless, Unliving

Spider, Giant: Poisonous (Enemy)

Prowess 3	Fighting 0	Endurance 1	Knowledge 0	Perception 0	Insight 1
Stength - 5 Animal Reflexes - 5 Movement – 10 Climbing - 15	Fangs - 5	Damage - 8 Stamina - 5 Poison Resistance - 5	Survival – 8		Animal Senses - 5 Danger Sense - 3 Directional Sense - 3 Weather Sense - 3 Fear - 5

Weapons: Fangs +0, poison 10/8/2 hours
Armor: Natural Armor +1
Special Abilities: Fearsome

Wolf (Enemy)

Prowess 2	Fighting 0	Endurance 1	Knowledge 0	Perception 1	Insight 1
Acrobatics - 5 Animal Reflexes - 5 Movement - 5 Swimming – 5	Fangs - 5	Damage - 5 Stamina - 5	Survival - 8	Tracking - 15	Animal Senses - 5 Danger Sense - 3 Directional Sense - 3 Weather Sense -3

Weapons: Claws +0
Armor: None
Special Abilities: Small

Alternative Damage Systems

In the rules as written, Damage Resistance is unique among the other Talents. It works just like regular ablative hit points until it reaches zero, at which point the character starts making saves against it to stay in the action. That exception strikes many people as a bit jarring. Following are two alternative damage systems that are more integrated with the way the rest of the basic ZeFRS system works: a nar-ish Talent Damage scheme by The Fiendish Dr. Samsara; and a damage save system by yours truly, inspired by Green Ronin's damage track.

Alternative 1: Talent Damage

To attack, roll your Weapon/General Fighting minus the opponent's Movement/General Prowess. Weapon & Strength Bonuses work as Column Shifts in this scenario.

A blow is landed on a roll above White. Wounds are classified:

- Green=Slight Wound
- Yellow=Moderate Wound
- Orange=Serious Wound
- Red=Specific Wound

When you are hit, you roll your Damage Stat + Armour if applicable (Armour also functions as a Column Shift). You are trying to match the color of the attacker's result. Doing so, means that you shrug off the wound because you are an S&S badass.

Every colour level by which you miss the attacker's result, gives you damage (so, if the attacker scored an Orange and you scored Green with your Damage, then you failed by two colours (i.e. Moderate Wound). Each colour results in a -1CS to your Damage Talent, with possible additional results.

When Damage Talent drops to 0, you are out of the fight. Lethality may depend on game-style.

All of this is just for PCs and Foes. Enemies just roll the Damage check—any failure at all result in a take-down.

The same system could be combined with eliminating the Damage Talent entirely and letting the player choose what Talent he wants to try and save himself with. This would introduce a tactical element:

> Kuran Besh is a big, hulking brute with a sword (Sword 15). His opponent gets in a blow and Kuran's player has to decide what he wants to try and save with. His sword Talent is so high, that he can probably shrug off almost anything with it. But, if he fails, then his Sword Talent drops in damage. OTOH, his Movement is only a 3: he's less likely to make the save, but he's less concerned with losing ability in Movement than in Sword.

The obvious problem is that there are lots on totally inappropriate Talents (Arcane Languages, for example). This isn't an issue for something like Truth & Justice, which this system is based on, because there are very few Qualities and characters are living in a soap-opera. But it is a problem to use in ZeFRS. One potential solution is to have the Damage roll made under the PC's choice of physical Talents, but penalties apply to all physical actions. This would let a PC with great Animal Reflexes resist damage as well as someone with great Stamina or Will.

Alternative 2: Damage Saves

Damage Checks

When a character has suffered a hit, she makes a resolution check against her Damage Resistance Talent. If her level of success exceeds the success of the attack, she suffers no damage. If it matches the success of the attack, she suffers a green wound. If it is equal to or below the success

of the attack, she suffers the wound level that corresponds to the level of success of the attack:

Non-lethal:

Green (bruised):
-1CS to subsequent non-lethal damage checks; any number of these may be sustained
Yellow (smarting):
lose initiative next turn; -1CS to all checks except lethal damage checks
Orange (battered):
no action this round, lose initiative next round; -3CS to all checks except lethal damage checks
Red (unconscious):
character drops senseless at the end of the round, may take no further action

Lethal:

Green (grazed):
-1 CS to subsequent damage checks; any number of these may be sustained
Yellow (stung):
lose initiative next turn plus -1CS to all checks, including damage checks
Orange (hurt):
-3CS to all actions including damage checks, act last every round
Red (stricken):
barely mobile, otherwise helpless (effective Movement of 0); every round make another damage check, failure means death; red success means no further checks necessary

Characters may suffer any number of green results, but only one of each higher result (yellow, orange and red). If a character suffers the same unique wound a second time, the effect of the second hit is upgraded to the next higher result. For example, a character who is already stung (has suffered a yellow wound) is hit again with another acceptable (yellow) success. The injured character is now battered (suffers an orange wound).

A red result may also inflict a specific wound. If the character who has been hit fails completely on the Damage Resistance check, he suffers the appropriate specific wound. If he achieves the degree of success required by the specific wound chart, he avoids a specific wound even though he still suffers a red result.

Enemies are not hardened fighters, so it takes much less to put them out of commission. An enemy drops out of the fight upon suffering a yellow, orange or red wound. Foes continue to fight and check just like PCs.

Armor and Weapons

Armor value is added to the character's Damage Resistance rating for checks against strikes on the area protected by the armor. Similarly, a weapon's damage bonus is deducted from the adjusted rating.

As Galya Eyepiercer leads her squad of commandoes toward a Skarabrian village, a volley of spears sails toward them from a stand of trees. One strikes her in the leg, but luckily she's wearing a set of greaves that day. Galya adds the greaves' armor value (2) to her damage resistance (8) and makes her check on the 10 column.

Characters who choose to defend during the combat round add their Weapon Talent to their Movement for purposes of calculating any attackers' combat differential.

Cornered by the Sultan of Maurizam's palace guards, Jackal wheels about and swings his mighty battleaxe in a murderous arc. At the sight of the oncoming wheel of destruction the nearest guard mutters "Bugger this for a lark" and switches to defense. The guard's

rating with the tulwar is 3 and his Movement is 4; Jackal subtracts 7 from his battleaxe rating when making a resolution check to attack him.

Under a damage-save system, the bonus granted by Strength, weapons and pieces of armor will need to be adjusted to model their effects under the point system. Each +1 bonus under the point system equates to about a +3.5CS (rounded up) under the save system. Thus a mighty warrior with a Strength Talent of 15 will have a +4CS damage bonus under the save system (15 divided by 10, rounded down to +1 originally), a falchion will provide a +7CS damage bonus (originally +2), a jack will provide +4CS protection (originally +1), and so on.

Healing

Each full day of rest heals one green wound. Once all green wounds have been healed, the injured person may begin working on healing graver wounds. After each full day of rest, the character may make a Damage Resistance check. Any degree of success means that the least severe unique wound has healed. Remaining more severe wounds must be healed on subsequent days.

Anyone may attempt to stabilize a stricken character by making a check against Medicine or General Perception. Any degree of success means that the stricken character need make no more Damage Resistance checks to stay alive.

A specific wound may cause effects that persist even after the red injury that caused it has healed. Referees should feel free to consider the nature and location of a specific wound in determining whether it has lingering effects (partial blindness in one eye following a hard blow to the head or a limp after taking a spear through the leg, for example).

A wound condition may be removed by a medicine check that achieves an equal level of success. As with natural healing, wounds are healed in order of severity. Concoctions prepared using the herbalism Talent will remove one green wound if successfully prepared, or two green wounds if the compounder scores a heroic success.

FIREARMS

Gunfire in ZeFRS is handled basically like any other kind of projectile fire. However, because gunfire is so much more destructive than an ordinary piercing wound[1] [1], firearms damage is augmented in a number of ways.

The shooter makes a resolution check to hit the target just as with any other type of projectile weapon. However, if the shot hits, the firearm's damage is modified in two ways. First, the weapon bonus is added to the damage inflicted, just as with a regular projectile weapon. Second, the degree of success on the check is figured as if the shooter's effective rating were higher by the firearm's weapon bonus.

> For example, suppose Jim Ryder, battlemaster of Kaffadang, has a Pistol Rating of 8. As he crosses the jade sands of the Basin of the Nameless Wanderers one afternoon, he comes under attack by desert raiders. Ryder opens fire. He makes a resolution check against his Pistol Rating and hits. His pistol has a weapon bonus of +2. Ryder checks his roll against the 10 column, not the 8 column, to figure the damage he does to the raider.

(Note that the above example assumes you're using the small definition of column. If you were using the large definition of column, Ryder would be checking somewhere in the 20-25 column to find the damage done. (Cf. the column debate.)

In addition, on a total success (orange result) a firearm has the potential to inflict the brawling specific wound appropriate for the body part struck. This specific wound may be resisted normally by PCs and foes.

> Ryder achieves total success (orange) on his resolution check and his shot hits the raider in the arm. A brawling specific wound to the arm causes the victim to drop anything held in that hand, so the raider's scimitar falls from his grasp although his arm remains usable.

Most armor provides very little protection against gunfire. Leather is useless, and mail provides only 1 point of armor. Plate armor is still somewhat effective because bullets may be deflected by its angled surfaces, though its rating is reduced by 1 point.

Firearms shoot so quickly that if a weapon has a rate of fire greater than one, it can be used to make multiple attacks on the same target without incurring a multiple actions penalty. Only changing targets counts as taking an additional action.

Consider a shooter who's using a weapon with a ROF of 3. He can shoot 3 times at one target without penalty; shoot once at one target without penalty and twice at another target with a penalty for taking an additional action; or shoot at one target with no penalty, a second target with a penalty for one additional action, then at a third target with a penalty for taking a second additional action.

Characters who make it a habit to shoot two guns at once may take Two-Weapon Fighting with the gun combination. As with melee weapons, each of the firearms must be a one-handed weapon (no blazing away with a rifle in each hand, Rambo).

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[1] RPG.netter Asklepios, an MD with emergency room experience, pointed out in his "Medical Musings" column that the effects of a gunshot wound are most comparable to a small explosion going off inside the victim's body.

Sample Firearms				
Weapon	**Weapon Bonus**	**Initiative Bonus**	**Range**	**Rate of Fire**
Blunderbuss	+3	0	50/110/200	1
Gatling gun	+3	0	75/175/275	3
pistol, flintlock	+2	0	40/90/160	1
pistol, light (e.g. derringer)	+1	+1	70/150/250	2
pistol, medium (e.g. "broomhandle" Mauser)	+2	+1	150/225/300	2
pistol, heavy (e.g. Colt M1911)	+3	0	200/350/400	1
Raygun	+2	+2	100/200/275	3
rifle, hunting	+2	0	200/350/700	2
rifle, military	+3	+1	180/325/600	1
rifle, sniper	+3	-1	300/600/1000	1
Shotgun	+4	-1	40/75/120	1

FIREARMS TALENTS

Gunsmith

Talent Pool: Perception

Your character is skilled in building and repairing guns. Repairs can be made with basic metalworking tools, but building a gun from scratch requires specialized equipment. When the character goes to build a gun, make a resolution check against his Gunsmithing rating. Success means he has built a working gun. Heroic success (red) means the gun is a masterwork with either greater range or increased ROF. Failure means that the smith has produced something that looks like a gun, but doesn't work; it may fail to fire, misfire, or even explode.

Luck Points : Buying a Twist of Fate

by The Fiendish Dr. Samsara, with additional twists by E.T. Smith and Mark Krawec

Although I think the idea of PCs having an unknown stash of Luck Points has some genre flavor, ultimately I find it a bad idea. My experiences with unknown resources in play is that players either A)get conservative and never use anything or B)figure they'll never know when they'll run out and so just use them up as soon as possible. Neither is very satisfying to me. So I'd rather not hide the Luck Points.

Something I like about the Prince Valiant game's Special Effects is that they are specific and thus tuned into genre. Dramatic Editing, of the kind you find in Adventure! and SotC is so undefined that it can easily go in non-genre directions.

So ZeFRS could provide "Plot Twists" and say that invoking them requires a Luck Point. Luck Points can still be used other ways, such as manipulating dice rolls, but Plot Twists are probably more powerful. There are only a few PV Special Effects, but they do get to the heart of things by and large. I will change some of them, however. For example, they have a separate "Find escape route" and "Escape Bonds"; I think I will just have some more general such as "Fortuitous Escape!". But most of the rest works as is: "Inflame lust", "Discover something hidden", "Incite passions of the crowd". Covers most of what you want to do. I might add some things along the lines of "Useful item secreted on your person" and "Enemy revealed as secret ally", which seem appropriate to me and not on PV's list.

Here's a list of possible Plot Twists:

- **The Dark Path**
  The character can elude pursuit by ducking into a route the pursuers will refuse to go. Typically a shadowed forest road bedecked with carved skulls. The GM has full discretion as to why the path is shunned.
- **Death Curse**
  The character, on the verge of certain doom, can bring about a Death Curse upon his foes. The Death Curse must be negative in intent and could not, for example, bring about good luck to his living allies. The Curse will work subtly, but inexorably. Thus a Curse of "Death to the Emperor!" will not result in the Emperor dropping dead at the moment, but he may soon contract a fatal disease or be thrown and trampled by his horse on the way home.
- **Defeat your Foe**
  One foe is completely defeated in combat but is not killed. Killing a foe requires winning a standard combat. But any other kind of defeat can be invoked through this Plot Twist; an enemy can be knocked out, disabled, or otherwise rendered ineffective. The enemy can also appear to die in some unverifiable manner, such as falling off of a cliff, but he will, in fact, survive. This Plot Twist cannot be followed by a standard combat attempt against the foe. It can frequently lead to a debt of vengeance on the foe's part.
- **Escape!**
  The character spends 1 Luck Point to fortuitously escape from his bonds or confinement. Potential escapes could include slicing through the ropes around his wrists against a sharp rock, finding a secret passage from the dungeon cell, or even eating a vulture while crucified and then being released by bandits.
- **Find the Hidden Item**
  The character finds some item that has been hidden.
- **Heart's Desire**
  A newly met NPC of the player's choice swoons over them and falls

into deep infatuation. For all those sighing temple maidens, you know.

- **Incite/Calm the Crowd**
  The character arouses the passions of a crowd and can direct them with one, simple command. Examples include: "Burn the Temple!", "Save the Princess!", "Flee the Horde!".
- **Inspire Individual**
  The character can inspire some emotion in an individual. Typical examples include pity, hatred, and lust.
  Alternately, the character can calm the passions of an aroused mob.
- **Mutual Foes Attack!**
  Just as your foe is about to run you through/your party is about to go down to defeat, a third party, equally hostile to both sides, attacks. You can join forces or use the distraction to escape.
- **Ready Steed**
  A horse is close at hand that the character can leap onto and ride off without difficulty. Not necessarily their own, it can be freed quickly and offers no significant resistance.

TRAPS

BY THE GOOD ASSYRIAN

Traps come in two varieties: ordinary and insidious. An ordinary trap is one that in essence "attacks" its victim. Its effects are resolved just like exposure to a fire. An ordinary trap has a trap rating. When a character triggers the trap, the referee makes a resolution chart check against the trap's rating minus the victim's Movement, Animal Reflexes or Danger Sense(whichever is higher). Armor on the body part struck by the trap provides its full normal protection.

Here are some sample ordinary traps:

- Foot trap with punji stakes - Rating 5 (Automatic damage to leg)
- Spring loaded dart shooter - Rating 10
- Swinging blade trap - Rating 15

Then there are insidious traps, which are traps that are particularly deadly in design or size. These are traps, like giant falling boulders, that inflict truly massive damage or can't be completely avoided no matter what the victim does.

Against an insidious trap, the target makes a resolution check against either Animal Reflexes or Danger Sense. Success lowers damage done by the trap to the second result given. Heroic (red) success means no damage; armor offers no protection.

Possible insidious traps include:

- Poisoned needle - Damage 1/0, Poison 15/20/5 minutes
- Dropping block from ceiling - Damage 7/3
- Rolling boulder trap - Damage 20/10

VEHICLES

ZeFRS pays very little heed to the minutia of travelling from place to place; unless you have to deal with poor weather or unruly animals, you get in, you ride, and you arrive. Thus the following vehicle rules are mostly concerned with tests of skill against another driver, whether in a race or in battle.

VEHICULAR MOVEMENT

Vehicles' speed falls into five broad categories: startup, slow, cruising, fast, and flat out. Vehicles that are going flat out suffer a penalty to maneuvering resolution checks. A vehicle travelling at its startup speed is treated as a stationary object for purposes of resolution checks involving moving vehicles.

For each vehicle, each speed category has a corresponding number. This is the vehicle's Movement Rating when moving at that speed. A vehicle is always considered to be moving at the sprint speed for its current Movement Rating. For convenience, here's an expanded table of Movements and their equivalent speeds.

Vehicle Movement Rating Speeds													
1-3	4-6	7-10	11-13	14-17	18-21	22-25	26-29	30-33	34-37	38-41	42-45	46-49	50-53
20 [250]	25 [300]	30 [350]	35 [400]	40 [500]	45 [550]	50 [600]	55 [650]	65 [750]	75 [850]	85 [950]	95 [1050]	105 [1150]	120 [1300]

For vehicles[2], the numbers in the chart refer to yards per combat turn [per minute]. Ratings from 50 on give an increase of 15/150 yards per minute for each 3-level increment or part therof (e.g. a Movement of 58 would result in a speed of 150 [1600]).

A vehicle's current Movement Rating also may figure into combats in which the vehicle is involved.

VEHICULAR MANEUVERS

Maneuvering rules apply to any chase or fight in which all participants are in vehicles or mounted. People on foot have no significant influence over the range that separates them from a vehicle unless their flat-out speed on foot is at least two thirds that of the vehicle's current speed. Thus the average person could run after an ox cart, and a very fast sprinter might be able to head off a trotting horse, but no one can hope to chase down or outrun a glider.

Each round, the person who's actually controlling the motion of each vehicle (e.g. the steersman of a boat, the driver of a chariot, or the person holding the reins of a mount) makes an initiative check. The winner of the check gets to decide whether to close with or withdraw from one of the other conveyances involved in the fight. It may be that withdrawing from one vehicle will mean closing with another or vice versa, but this does not count as taking two actions (q.v.). The winner of the contested resolution check may change the distance between conveyances by up to the winning vehicle's movement rate per round. If the amount of change possible is greater than the distance that currently separates the two conveyances, the winner may choose to overtake or drop behind the loser.

[2] It might not be a bad idea to read the movement chart for characters in yards, too. Upon closer examination of the rules as written, the fastest person in the world tops out at an 8-minute mile.

This assumes that the vehicles are travelling in the same direction. When one vehicle intentionally crosses the path of another, both controllers make resolution checks against the appropriate Talent. If both fail, the vehicles collide. If one controller achieves a higher level of success than the other, the more successful controller may decide the range at which the vehicles' paths will cross. If both achieve the same level of success, their paths cross at medium range.

When vehicles approach head-on, both controllers make resolution checks. If both fail, the vehicles smash into one another. If both succeed, they miss one another at a range decided by the controller who scored a higher level of success, or medium range on a tie.

Vehicles travelling at their flat-out speed are pushing their limits and suffer a -2CS penalty to all maneuvering resolution checks.

The controller's resolution check may also be subject to a penalty or receive a bonus if it's a particularly sluggish or nimble craft.

VEHICULAR COMBAT

Attacks from a moving vehicle against a pedestrian or vehicle moving at startup speed are subject to a penalty of -1CS per increment of difference in speed unless the vehicle is bearing straight toward its effectively unmoving target, in which case there is no penalty. The same penalty applies to attempts to throw something (not necessarily a weapon) to or onto one from the other.

> Esmis has stopped by his favorite kebab booth in the marketplace of Abakka for a quick bite before heading over to see an acquaintance about selling some gems he has happened to come into possession of. As he calls for an extra piece of bread, a large trunk in the back of a passing cart flies open and up stands a hooded man with a crossbow! The man looses a bolt at Esmis. Esmis is standing still and the cart is moving at its cruising speed; the man takes a -2CS penalty on his resolution check.

When an attack is made against a vehicle or its occupants from a stationary position or from a vehicle whose path the target vehicle is crossing, the Movement rating corresponding to the vehicle's current speed is used as its Movement for the purpose of figuring the attacker's adjusted rating.

> An archer who fires on a chariot moving at its cruising speed (Movement 12) subtracts 12 from his Longbow Talent to find the column on which to make his resolution check. Better hope he's a good shot. If he were to try to put one into a passing air skiff that was going full out, he would subtract 45. Better hope he's a really, really good shot.

However, vehicles that are approaching one another head-on, or withdrawing from one another, are perceptually stationary. In this case, the vehicle's movement is represented by the controller's rating with the appropriate Talent.

Vehicles each have a Damage Resistance rating and may be harmed by weapons just like a character may be. However, most - indeed, virtually any conveyance not made from bark or hide - will have some inherent armor value.

VEHICULAR DAMAGE

Collision damage is determined by making a resolution check against the speed of the vehicle that does the striking. If it rear-ends a slower vehicle, subtract the slower vehicle's speed from the faster's. If they hit head-on, add the two speeds together. Apply the base resulting damage to each vehicle. The armor value for each vehicle is added to the damage inflicted on the other.

One icerigger t-bones another on a frozen lake. Each icerigger is moving at its cruising speed (Movement 18). A resolution check is made on the 18 column of the chart. The roll is 67, which is a marginal success (green). Each icerigger suffers 2 points of damage: one for the marginal hit plus one for its armor value.

If a moving vehicle strikes a pedestrian, makes a resolution check against the vehicle's speed rating at time of impact minus the victim's Movement. The resulting damage, plus the vehicle's armor value, is inflicted only on the pedestrian.

If the vehicle crashes into a stationary object such as a pillar, a boulder or a tree, figure the damage suffered by the crashing vehicle as above. It's up to the referee to decide whether the impact causes significant harm to the object struck.

When a vehicle has been reduced to 0 damage, it begins to come apart. Each combat turn, the operator must make a resolution check against the appropriate Talent. On a failure, control is lost and the vehicle wrecks, inflicting damage on its occupants as if they had been pedestrians struck by a vehicle moving at its current speed. On a partial through complete success (green through orange), the operator can bring the vehicle to a safe halt. On a heroic success, the operator keeps the vehicle moving for one more turn through sheer finesse.

A vehicle that suffers a red result on a damage check must make a resolution check against its current damage rating. If it fails, it suffers the vehicular equivalent of a specific wound and becomes inoperable even though not completely destroyed. The referee may decide what that means under the circumstances of the moment.

VEHICULAR TALENTS

Driving a team of animals, no matter what the vehicle or animal, is covered by the Animal Handling Talent. Players who like a little more granularity may wish to substitute a Driving (Animal) Talent for each type of creature the driver has trained with. (This if you don't like the idea of a northern warrior who ordinarily travels in a sled drawn by four polar bears being able to yoke up a pair of chariot lizards in the Vanseri Desert just as easily.)

Aircraft Pilot (type)

Talent Pool: Knowledge or Prowess, depending on craft

Your character has been taught to command a flying vehicle. It may be a simple glider or surveillance kite, or some sort of magical vessel or flying carpet. The pool under which this talent falls depends on how physically involved the pilot is in guiding the vehicle's path. Control of vehicles whose course is altered by pulleys and wires or by magical gesture and words depends on knowledge, whereas such things as a hang glider or flying carpet must be wrestled about by main force.

Sample Vehicles						
Vehicle	**Passengers**	**Speeds**	**Damage**	**Maneuver Bonus**	**Armor**	**Notes**
air skiff	6	3/10/20/33/45	30	0	+1	Shaped like a small riverboat; kept aloft by magic or technology left behind by semi-mythological Ancients
canoe	3	1/3/7/10/15	15	0	0	
chariot	3	2/7/12/17/20	13	0	+1	
icerigger	2	2/9/18/27/30	20	0	+1	A lightweight wooden frame equipped with wooden runners or metal blades (maneuver bonus +1 on ice, useless on snow) and a large sail, used for fast travel across frozen lakes or snow-covered fields
Kite	1	n/a	10	-4	0	A kite pilot may dive and climb to a certain extent, but can wander no farther than the cable that tethers the kite to the ground will permit
oxcart	6	1/3/5/7/10	35	-3	+2	Not fast, but sturdy and capable of carrying nearly a ton of cargo.